

Kate Stephens
Field Notes
October 7 - October 25
(No year)

SAN DIEGO NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM

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Oct 7

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The different between the oaks between San Diego and Banner Canon. Near San Diego there is no oak trees proper only a smallish scrub oak with leaves not larger than one inch long while from Canon up the real oak trees have a leaf two inches long and near Julian Oaks have leaves sometimes six inches long. Our camp ground had snow berries, ferns, mint, Hemlock Pine, Oaks of two kind, Sycamores, Willow,

Oct 8

Camped last night in the Canon near Banner a pleasant night but noticed nothing worth ^{notice} except what is on the preceding page. This morning things looked very different to me. My cold was much better and a good night's rest had made me feel another woman. So I rode down the rough but beautiful road I could not but admire, even more than usual the Jimson weed and tho I protest against the name "weed" for such a beautiful flower. "Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these could be well said of this flower, and unlike the Lily we know does not require to be nursed and cultured. Lilies may neither toil nor spin but the Jimson weed will live where the dust is thickest the ground almost devoid of moisture. The sun may glare down on it yet the elegant cups with their ragged edging will brighten the wayside. Heliconia was about the only butterfly we saw until after we passed Banner, then fortune favored us and a small white one lit on a small plant. It proved to be new to us and one more was caught, also a skipper which I do not know. I had always thought that the Yucca was beyond the capability of being eaten by the cattle by the cattle * till to day. But I see if the cattle can reach up to the base of the leaf and eat upwards they can manage not to prick themselves with the sharp point, and when they can so eat the leaves of Hills the Plank very many were killed in that way

* (That's a queer sentence)

on San Felipe, the cattle seemed to travel somewhere
about six miles from water for at that distance the
Yuccas were not so often destroyed. It was soon after
that place we began to look for a butterfly we knew
of that we wished for our collection we saw many
but such a place, it was as erratic as a Cat and would
light on a rock ahead and look so like the rock we could
not see it then when it was finally captured it had a
pleasant way of slipping out from under the net. One
Jack rabbit a very few chipmunks but not any ~~to~~ ^{of} ~~the~~
Threshers. One flock of Quail when we
reached Masons where we pitched camp, and set
out traps in hope of a good days hunt tomorrow
for butterflies.

Oct 9.

At Mr Masons called La Puerta the gate and
indeed it is a gate as I will tell presently. We spent
the day hunting butterflies and found a number of new kinds
One a large moth like Skipper (a Yucca butterfly that is not yet
named. ^I but the season must be past it best for most of them
were badly worn. Many more rare kinds of small Hesperidae
I found resting on a plant in bloom, it had yellow flowers
Frank got a few Mice and a Kildear.

The Pleasure of Camping. — It is not all cakes and ale
even on a pleasure trip. This same evening it began to
blow, as bed time came on it blew a little harder. Supper
under difficulties after getting it cooked and on the table
we concluded that if we wanted to eat it without too
much dust we had better carry it up a bank, we had
already carried everything down the bank so as to be
able to cook in a sheltered spot, we carried every thing
up and eat our supper in the tent. It blew considerably
at bed time but hoped it would go down soon so went
to bed. Now our tent had been set up in a dirty yard
where goats, Indians Chickens and dead cattle and every
kind of rubbish, that is collected in a half Spanish ranch.
We had swept the floor in the tent but the refuse had
been banked up round. The outside as soon as we were
comfortable in bed the wind began to sweep round and
under the tent carrying this aforesaid dust and dirt into

X The butterfly not the place
I Megathymus stephensii.

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the tent until a thick cloud of this malodorous stuff almost stifled us besides whipping the tent about so we thought it would come down on us. The weather steadily improved till Frank had to get up and take the tent down and we laid all night covered up to suffocation. The wind blowing a gale every thing covered with dust if we opened our eyes a shower of sand cut in on them.

Oct 10

This morning the wind if anything was worse. The dust hid the mountains from sight so Frank thought we had better get out we packed up I would hold on to something while Frank would struggle round to get something else in place or hold the covers down while it seemed to have a dozen corners to blow up and prevent things from being tied up. At last we were ready and I went to bid Mrs. Mason good bye and was greeted with the usual remark, "all the years we have lived here it has never blown so hard we have never had so bad a storm." How is it I wonder we always get in the worse storm of the driest year? but we had to go down I am sure the worst hill in the state. Nothing could have been worse than that hill even Frank owned that it was rather a bad hill and did not object to my walking I had on a little shawl tied on my head for tho we had passed over the ridge and had the wind in our backs it was impossible to keep on a hat or sunbonnet. Glad I was when the wagon had slid down that dreadful place and we were at last on the desert tho Frank hardly called it desert yet Agave, Cactus, Opuntia Mesquite sage brush the first forage are the vegetation we came thru to day. A jack rabbit, a La Conte thrasher and a small flock of doves were the only signs of life we passed all morning we did not go very far. Vallecito. The name of the deserted ~~house~~ stage station we staid there for the rest of the day I began a sketch of the old adobe house or rather the old sod house. No one has lived in it for years except Bats which on this day became our lawful game. If anyone wants good sport let them take a butterfly net and after dark go to just such an old ruin take a lantern and catch bats we are somewhat used to swinging a net and one bat is the reward of

our skill - The way this house was built was this ⁴
Huge beams of timber were dragged down from Lagoona
Mountain by oxen over a foot ~~thick~~ square they were
used as ridge poles while small trees were used for the
sides of the roof smaller poles are crossed and all
are tied together with cowhide that has the hair still
on. The walls are made of salt grass sod the roof
was covered with a layer of mud. The porch was
supported by salt grass sod pillars only they are square
and at the present time anything but plumb, while
cattle have rubbed against them till they are concave
in the middle. A queer old place I have no doubt
the scene of many a tough adventure. Not far
away is a grave in this lonely spot, someone who
evidently ~~had~~ left friends behind him for a white
marble stone looks ~~great~~ goastly so far from human
inhabitants. A graveyard always looks lonesome, how
much more so away out over the edge of the en-
habited world. That was not the only lonely grave
we saw on that trip. By the road side at one place
were four long heaps of stones marking some forgotten
and unrecorded people

Oct 11.
A cold weary day Cactus aculea, a plant that is all thorns
stiff pale blue looking as you are a little way off from
it a pretty fearey ^{looking} shrub almost a small tree, some
we saw were in leaf the leaves are so small and
inconspicuous unless you picked a branch and
looked close you would not see any leaves on it at all
At noon rested at palmetta spring. The little
Palms that gave the name to the spring have been
burnt down but good water is a great luxury
to be had here. I saw only one kind of butterfly
(Arbrevenae) ^{the name is almost} ^{indisputable} four or five specimens and still
Frank says this is not the desert. We came to Carresa
Creek the Teams that passed us at Valleetta were just
pulling out. Here was another kind of house that people
live in. A few Oak poles bound together with hide
while the sides are filled in with arrow weed and the
roofed thatched with Tules. Here Frank preserved
two La Conte Thrashers he shot that afternoon Carresa,

Creek is called so from a kind of Tulle that grows in the ⁵ creek bad water, lots of Hogs very many Mosquitoes which made me look as if I had the Measles in a day or two

Oct 12

On this day we came upon the real desert all our cactus disappeared only a few shrubs mostly Larria one Cotton tail and one or two Piranhas butterflies. What a queer place it is this desert, we have left most of our gravel and ^{can} see more of the building and rebuilding of this old world of ours here in this barren place than where the ground brings forth its increase. Here we see heaved up mountains of earth or sand in which are water worn pebbles ^{boulders} & down the sides we can see the coarse pebbles in great sheets as they have fallen and been carved down by rains while all along the washes can be seen the reforming of the sand into sandstone again. One thing struck me as rather strange when we think of sedimentary formations we think of it as being formed under the sea and here it could be seen quite plain forming in the desert with the aid of the East East quantity of water. The sand will be blown in a thin layer over miles, a small shower will form it firms the sand and alkali into a kind of clay or mud when it dries it is a smooth dry clay that is ready for the same thing to be repeated in many places this cracks open with the heat and looks like sole leather; as it curls up, and is about a quarter of an inch thick many miles of this kind rebuilding of the sand stone was passed. another queer thing is possibly a rats dung gets blown around it gathers a little dirt a shower wets it, it blows round again gathers a little more till it gets as large as an oak apple, why is it not possible that stones are made in this way. Further along we came to high banks in one layer it is composed of almost exclusively of broken oysters shells whence came they in this lonely desert

we turned off the main road in the afternoon over a road that Frank had not been before and some little anxious time we could not tell whether we should strike water or not that ever pressing anxiety in the desert "Twelve miles from water twenty years to water" is serious reading. It seemed a long time until we struck a beach mark and traced over what had once been a large lake or part of the Colorado river in some places as white with shells as it would be after a good hail storm. The shells were just about the size of hail too. On and on still not knowing how far the sun perishingly near setting. Once Frank went to the top of a mound to see if anything in sight was familiar to him no nothing he could show a near landmark. Presently a white horse was sighted. Had he got loose? and left some one in trouble we asked one another but when he came near he showed that he had not been harnessed lately and was in good condition that made us think that water could not be far off yet no sign. When suddenly right in front of us, not more than a mile away shone up a most beautiful lake so close that we could easily get there before dark.

Oct 13.

This lake this surprise in the midst of an arid desert with its ~~Relecan~~ Relecan, cormorants, gulls, ducks herons and other water birds is another of the making and unmaking of the world far up in the Sierra Nevada. The summer sun melts the snow this melted snow comes down the Colorado river and when the dry season is on with no rain for months you hear the question asked "is the river rising how about the overflow thus at the time when rivers are supposed to fall. And the rises and flows over some part of the desert that countless ages ago was all under ^{partial} water only the most depressed spots are filled, now each year, and this Relecan Lake is one of them.

after filling, this and other lakes of the Colorado overflow if very high it fills the Saltern Lake or Saltern Sea often the overflow runs underground and then there is water only in places. Now this same Colorado River which name means red, brings down vast quantities of earth with it in suspension. The earth is so fine that it is held in suspension not only in the river itself but the lakes are thick with the mud of the Sierra Nevada Mountains and all these dry lake with so many shells is composed of the earth from the distant Sierra Nevada. The water tho' tasting earthy is good and cold yet one cannot quite fancy drinking such smelly water, It takes days for the water to clear if it is standing in a bucket or jar and the lake is forever moving the wind causing the waves to ripple on the shore like the sea. All this day was spent in hunting butterflies and beetles and very few were found. Frank shot ^{two} a quail a La conte there was a hawk a rare Towhee and a coot we hoped we should have plenty ducks to eat but so far very few have been seen and none shot, traps were put out for coons cats and coyotes with one coyote as the result.

Oct 14

Went with Frank to look up the traps and coming home a small butterfly flew in my net, and on examining it it seemed to be quite new bring another ~~for~~ case of the early ~~spring~~ ^{birds} catching the butterfly during the day several were caught and one or two other small rare ones but the only plentiful kind seems to be exilis. This afternoon I went gathering Mesquite beans for the horses for the first time. The beans are the ripe dry beans that have fallen of the branches and they are as easy to pick up as if one crawled under a blackberry bush. Wherever anything grows in this desert you may be sure that it is and the thorns are thick on the ground under as well as on

on the bushes. This evening one of those small accidents happened that might have turned out very serious, one of our horses was taken sick, in itself a very serious thing away from help nearly a hundred miles. But Frank trying to hold him down to give him some medicine was overpowered by the horse and as he ~~struggled~~ ~~up~~ struggled to get up struck Frank in the mouth with his head, cutting Frank's lip badly, for a few moments I thought Frank was struck in the stomach. A hurt man and a sick horse for company all night would have been anything but pleasant but as it turned out both man and horse soon recovered.

Oct 15

Up early and nothing in the traps so we decided to pull out for the calf holes so was on the road at a quarter past eight and at a quarter past ten reached the calf holes. This desert is full of surprises. We had not gone over half a mile when our lovely little Pelican Lake was completely out of sight which shows how easily one can be quite near water and yet miss it. The ground was perfectly level and smooth so far, then we struck what is called the self rising ground. Have you ever looked at a pan of Bread sponge after it has risen well. It is full of cracks, and heaves as the gas rises well this ground is just like that only it is baked hard but looks funny and as you can imagine is not smooth driving over. The plane itself or rather bed ancient lake is level that it is the bed of a lake is still quite plain for there is still many shells chiefly union and they seemed to be larger and more perfect on this side tho that may be only fancy. After crossing this bed we came upon a forest of Mesquite trees with shallow channels that could be seen more by the Ry weed, growing in them than by the depressions. I must say that I admire the Mesquite bush or tree very much it has a very even rounded look, the branches spreading out close to the ground and a pleasant green look where every thing else has a dried up dusty look. Altogether it is a handsome tree but Oh the thorns. There was no life to be seen in all that forest. Not a butterfly Frank saw something run

across the road and at one place tracks of quail (9)
after coming thru we came to new river like most rivers
no water running in it, at least in that place. The water
runs there most years about the months of May June and July
this year it ran till August. Altho the water does not run
there is plenty of water in it. Quite dead holes in many
places have water in them the water must rise from under
ground and the strange thing about them is some are
good water while perhaps the hole above and below
would be so bad that it is unfit even for the horses
to drink. There is no telling what kind of water it is
only by tasting it. Yesterday evening some young men
passed they were going on to the railway about sixty
miles on and expected to stay until noon to day
at the calf holes we hoped to get there before they left
so they might carry a letter and post it on the train
as there is no mail on the desert and once there all com-
munication with our friends ceases, unless some lucky
incident as above. When we arrived at the calf holes
we found they had started on again so as there seemed
nothing of interest there we turned back and by the side
of a Mesquite tree had a cold lunch, for we tasted the water
at a hole close by and decided that the horses had
better go thirstily than drink it. Under some Mesquite
trees we found quantities of Mesquite beans and Frank
and I gathered a sack full for the horses for we cannot
travel the desert without a sharp lookout for horse feed
and water and grasses is conspicuous by its entire absence
of little pig weed in these lake channels and some grama
grass on the west side of the desert. We came back to the
crossing of New River and set up camp put up the tent and
Frank went out to set traps as he thinks this is the most
likely place to get coons and wild cats. After he got back
he went to a nice large pool to try the water and this
water was quite good not very clear but sweet no
butterflies in sight. Once or twice we heard quail
and once saw a flock of ducks but that was all. To
day for the first time we saw San Jacinto and a little
of gray back both with snow on the top.

Oct 16

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This morning Frank found one coon in his traps he also shot four ducks, during the day he caught three small fish, that and one beetle that he picked up on the water's edge, comprises the sum total of our days returns, and the day has passed without any event to narrate. I spent most of the day painting on my picture of Vallecetto while Frank preserved his skins while I am writing beside the camp fire the almost full moon over head not a breath of wind all so calm the only thing we can hear is a night heron with its sharp short bark the first time I heard them at Pelecan Lake there were three or four together barking at the same time I thought it was a dog. I have enjoyed this bright calm day perhaps I enjoy the calm all the more because we have had so much wind the first few days of coming out.

Oct 17

A wild cat in Frank's traps, not enough to make it worth while to stay here any longer so we made up our minds to pull out at noon Frank caught three fish last night one carp and ^{one} the other kind of fish we had them for breakfast and ducks for dinner. This place beside the new River looks very pretty for a picture but I do not like it so well as Pelecan Lake. There is no entomological hunting at all a few little earth colored beetles found among the Mesquit leaves is all that I have seen, as some time not a great while ago probably 1891. The water rose up and covered all the ground where we have our camp. and afterwards Pig weed grew to a great height. some of the bleached stalks being as high as my waist. The ground is covered with the dead stalks. The chief things around here is Mesquit Night Herons all of which seem to be young. Plenty Coyotes, wild cats, come and fish. Frank took a photo of our camp after which we pulled out. We drove back thru the forest of Mesquit. Now unless you have been a very large bump of locality don't go off the travelled roads when on the desert for if you do you will get lost sure. Frank is so blessed and besides has been on this desert many times so after leaving the Mesquit forest pulled off the road across country to get to Duck Lake which the

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knew was somewhere to the south and east of Pelican Lake. He had never been that way to it before so did not know exactly how far we should have to travel possibly about seven miles. After going some distance we came to a channel full of water with a good many Ducks on it. Frank shot two and they both lay dead in the middle of the water. so now how to get them out was the question. The way he did it was not the way it would have been advisable had there been any young ladies around. indeed had there been gentlemen I think he would have had to forego the pleasure of duck for supper at any rate. I got my ducks and packed them so as we drove along. Now as we drove along we found that this blue came from Pelican Lake and was one of the channels connecting Pelican Lake with New river. so there was nothing for it but to go to Pelican Lake drive round the lake to the south side and then east to get to Duck Lake. It was all cross country with the only knowledge that some where in that direction we ought to find the lake and would be sure to find sand dunes. Sand Dunes are not good driving over. We drove perhaps two miles when we came right on to the dunes Frank went on top of the highest to spy out the country. No lake in sight. We crossed over at the ~~east~~ ~~east~~ ~~east~~ part and came Mesquit trees that looked as tho they grew along one of the channels. after getting close up to them a little party in them showed a little water and as we began to force our way thru them there lay Duck Lake right at our feet. Not a sign of it could be seen twenty feet away and so far as Frank knew was as yet four or five miles away. Frank wanted to find some grass for the horses and peeping thru the trees was something green so we forced our way thru Mesquit trees no easy thing nor pleasant as like everything else in this desert it is made up of thorns. However we got through and found nothing but Pignut and Bardock. but the horses were hungry, they do not seem to care much for Mesquit beans and they began to eat the docks at once. However

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that was not good enough for them if we could get anything better so again we had to force ourselves thru the Mesquite to get down to the shore of the lake. We found a nice place for camp but nothing better for the horses. So Frank gave them a bunch of our much treasured hay for if they have grain alone it does not satisfy them and they winy for hay. There seems to be many more ducks on this duck lake than on Pelecan Lake also more shore birds or waders. The lake also is I think in some ways rather prettier the hills around show up better and to night I saw them and the lake lit up most gorgeously. A very brilliant red sky reflected in the water till the water and sky looked like fire. The faraway mountains a beautiful soft purple, the farthest range looking as tho a thin light veil was held up before it making it look lighter than the range in front of it. On the top of one of these hills is the boundary of California and Mexico but this is a digression I was talking about the sun set. Many people have seen such scenes and many have described them so I leave further description of sun set on the lake to them. My mind had to be engaged on more practical things for there was supper to get.

Oct 18
Nothing at all in the traps this morning so thought we would return to our first love Pelecan Lake more particularly as there ~~was~~^{is} no food for the horses and the water is not drinkable. I went for a walk with Frank when he took the horses to try for some little quita grass for them, did not see any butterflies on the way, went as far as the sand dunes. These dunes seem to be all on the south and east side while the north and west are without them, what is the reason? is it because of the wind? but there is no sand to make dunes of only on the east and south, all around the whole country it seems to be good ground, perhaps somewhat alkali but still good. Colorado mud silt as I have described before. Well we pulled out after dinner and

soon came on just a few smallish plants along the shore as we drove along that was just covered with little butterflies Frank got out of the wagon and caught most of them and all our butterflies marked Duck Lake were taken on those plants Frank tried for a while but missed. As we reached the corner of the lake Frank shot a duck, on the wing, it proved to be one that he had not in his collection. It is always a red letter day with us if we get a new species and it improved our opinion of Duck Lake. We went along a small dry channel for some distance Frank looking out for to see how we could get out and at last we came out right against the sand dune that Frank looked out on yesterday and thus we avoided driving thru the sand dunes and if we had known need not have driven thru them before. We made Pelecan Lake a little over half an hour. We caught only a few butterflies that day Frank found he had forgotten one of his rat traps and decided to walk back for it, after breakfast next morning.

Oct 19

We have decided to start back for home at noon today as we found nothing in the traps again this morning so while Frank walked back for his wire trap I packed up as much as I could and there was some little ^{growing in} grass patches and as Frank had pulled some we made a nice large bundle of it for the horses to take along with us. How little leisure I have found on this trip of ours. This morning seems to be the only time I have really had time to stand for a minute or two to look at the lake and as I have stood there I have for the first time I have seen the carp jump out of the water. They seem very active this morning a good many seem to be on the jump. Frank was just about an hour and a half gone, and we soon after left we returned on the same road we came, it is about five miles to the old beach mark and while Mesquite grows below the beach mark nothing grows above ⁱⁿ for miles but

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Carria and a dried up looking bush about one or
two feet high indeed the larvae does not grow more than
about feet and not very close together, a dreer lonely
drive, a great many old shells until the the beach is
reached but I only saw two kinds a union and one
bivalve about half an inch long, tho I did not examine
the ground and it seems quite likely that the small
shell that I found round the lake would be found there
too. I did not see any signs of a living shell. Today
is our longest drive without water and we have to make
a dry camp to night so we drive rather late for the
last few miles we pass over ground that is almost without
vegetation, not any that can be used for a fire. The
moon rose before we reached wood our chief went. In
going to the top of a little rise what should we see but
in front of us but a camp fire. What speculation there
is in that on a lonely desert drive, who are the
people? shall we enjoy their company or shall we
be glad to drive past them, do we know them or is
it an Indian outfit? Such were the thoughts we asked
ourselves and each other as this bright light flickered
before us. Someone that knows the Desert Trail
said for they have come just as far as there is wood
for their fire. As we came up to them they proved
to be one solitary man he asked if we could spare
him a little water and as he spoke Frank recognized
him to be a man that knew the desert well, and he was
in what to many would be serious trouble and to some
perhaps death. Redding horse back with one blanket and
a small canteen of water his horse had fallen ill. he
had given his last drop of water to his horse in hopes that
it might be able to carry him to the next watering place
but it had fallen by the way. We were soon unloaded
and supper ready. The horses had to share just a half
bucket of water each and some Mesquite beans and the
grass we pulled in the morning made them as comfortable
as circumstances would allow. Then to bed. Oct 20.

Oct. 20

15

Our companion started directly after breakfast driving his sick horse still hoping to get it to water. We started perhaps an hour and an half afterwards. We soon came up to them and then happened what has so often ^{seen alone} happened before. The poor horse had to be left to get on as best he could either to lay there and die or struggle on alone to water. Our trip proved to be quite interesting many interesting stories he told of desert life. He had also explored the mountains round for many years. He told us the blocks of marble we saw in the washes had come from Carrara ^{mountain} ~~peak~~. Also that balls of black stone which he called petrolium balls were found on the desert. He told us where we could find some very large fossil shells and petrified wood and of some palm canyons. All these things have to be taken with a grain of salt. Many gruesome stories he told as well. The day was quite hot and early in the afternoon began to fog. George our own horse had been on the desert so often that he can rattle up a living but the borrowed horse could not do so well so he began to play out. a bad sandy road all day. At last I and our friend set out to walk to help along and lighten the load, but where as we wished to get to Carrara Creek we had to stop at Palmetto spring and half of our treasured hay had to be given. While George had to make out with greas grass which Frank chopped up with the hatchet and carried to him.

Oct. 21

After breakfast Frank took a photograph of the clay cliff that rise up around Palmetto spring, and off once more. Gef still showed signs of being tired but Frank saw that he was taking advantage of yesterday, numerous stoppings and wished to do the same again and had no objection to George pulling most of the load. Still we only made nine miles to Ballico where our friend found some donkeys that belonged to him so after having dinner with us

mounted one of them and rode home which was six miles. I sat and put in a little more of my painting the of the old house that after noon and we hunted for a little time in the evening for bats in the old house Frank caught one of the rare kind also one of a very rare kind indeed. and so to bed. * But here I must say I left out some of our happenings yesterday the 20th We drove for Carreer Creek before lunch watered the horses and a horse man rode up soon afterwards he was more picturesque than is allowable in ordinary life, on the stage he would have been perfection. To begin at top of him he had on an old sombrero that had lost the top still it was neatly finished off with a few tufts of bright red hair sticking out where the top had been, crummed with a silver band but it was very much the worse for wear. A leather strap near an inch wide held it on and passed over his chin half buried in a thick growth of bristles over half an inch long still he had a very pretty face with blue eyes and was not by any means bad looking a shirt of blue with a pistol a good foot long with frayed leather chaps. His horse had rings of horse hair rope and another horse hair rope was hung on the saddle. He had just come from Mexico which is just over the mountains and was an acquaintance of our friend and was a very good fellow. By our friends account he promised if possible to go back and bring the poor abandoned horse to water if it should be able to come so far. These vacarors are a very rough lot of people indeed and from what I can hear are more fond of doing a mean action than a kindness I only hope that this one will do so much kindness it would redeem the bad name somewhat they all seem to deserve

* I had not read Pepp Dray at that time.

It is five ~~six~~ or six miles now to La Puerta still deep sand. but Ocotea as well as Sarra and Cactus. Frank took a picture of the bad hill I walked up it the wind began to blow and I feared we should have a storm on our return as on our departure however it turned out somewhat better I think everyone was pleased to see us back at La Puerta especially the cats and chickens. We were no sooner in that dirty yard than we were perfectly overrun with cats. the chickens (save the mark) were in the wagon so after getting a few stumps out and taking a ~~whip~~ whip for them we covered everything up as snug as we could but in less than a minute I turned round found half a dozen knowing chickens had picked a large hole in our sack of wheat and their beaks were just dancing in and out soon things we straightened up a bit and I got in one little butterfly hunt and found one at least. a nice little brown butterfly. I fried some Quail for supper and as I stooped down for a piece of wood to renew the fire an artful old hussy of a hen picked out one of my Quail from out the frying pan as it was on the hot fire. I also left the grub pot open while I passed from it to the table and while doing so a dear pussy cat crept under the side of the tent whisked off the best part of a can of Canned beef. However these things are little diversions that keep things lively traps set and set to bed. When we camp out one is scarcely able to keep Sunday as a day of rest and this day was passed with almost forgetfulness of it. To get to get to water is the all absorbing thing it is the chief thought almost the sole topic of conversation with whoever you meet. What wonderful things could be done with this desert if there were water. From Banner to La Puerta is 8 miles and with one strong canon is beautifully level ground good soil and if it had water would grow anything you can see the gentle slopes going miles away on one side gently resting against the mountains feet. From La Puerta to Ballacito ~~there~~ five miles ^{it} also has some good good land.

Vallecito itself has plenty of water and looks lively and green as you come to it from the desert side but has not one acre cultivated. From Vallecito from Vallecito Creasco Creek is 18 miles that has not much agricultural land from Carasco Creek to Pelican Lake is 24 miles some of that is good soil some is light poor soil while near the hills is mostly sand. From Pelican Lake to the cag holes as far as we went five miles was mostly good soil but want of water debars even the poorest kind of living not one home with the exception of La Puerta all that way and it is the same till you reach Yuma so I am told.

Oct 23

Went out in the morning with the youngest daughter of the house to hunt for arrow heads there must at some former time been many hundred of Indians living in that valley and like all Indians they lived quite away from the water that is noticeable every where that the water may be plentiful and easily got at. The Indians never live very near but prefer to carry water for their use. Great quantities of broken jollas were seen and a few arrow heads were found one we picked up was made from ~~the~~ a piece of a plate a little of the glaze with a blue pattern. Ben left on on one side I suppose that shows the deterioration of the art of making the arrows. We found some pieces of shells probably carried there from the sea a few *Olivella biplicata* and we found two kind of beads made from a shell probably *O. biplicata* hardly a butterfly was seen. Frank got one of the Agave butterflies which I expect will be the best we shall get, we saw a few on Oct 24 but did not get one. In the afternoon on Sunday the dogs caught a badger and Frank skinned it to day as he has been disappointed in going on a deer hunt. I had for my dinner to day one Quail one rail and one snipe the three was

not more than I was able to eat for myself Frank preferred the snipe and some mice that he caught (I expect I meant that he only had the snipe to eat and skinned the mice) It was a cold evening and our friends asked us very strongly to come up to the house and spend some time as the weather was cold I did not get my work finished till quarter passed seven we thought it only polite to go but when we got there they had all gone to bed I suppose those are desert manners

Oct-24

of Skunk and some mice was our harvest this morning and as there seems no chance of a deer hunt we decided to clear out altho in some respects this is a very interesting place still it is so dirty and the Chickens turkeys pigeons cats and dogs are so numerous and hungry they would eat us I believe if we lay down quiet I shall be glad to get away tho I have seldom seen more kind and sociable people. We left about one o'clock and drove a little way into the San Telepe valley In grala flat; Dry lake or Pleur valley as it is variously called we chopped some grala grass for the horses we saw one or two Agave butterflies but did not catch any In San ~~Trancisco~~ pass in San Telepe valley we came to Trancasatta. the first juniper on our return home tho there may be a few in dry lake set traps, suppers and to bed.

Oct 25

This day is the last of our very pleasant desert trip and we drove thru very striking difference of vegetation In the morning Agave Larrea Mesquit Cactus yucca then as these diminished. juniper Desert willow cat claw Mesquit then mountain older, sycamore, oak spruce

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